

Customer No.: 31561  
Docket No.: 12009-US-PA  
Application No.: 10/605,782

**AMENDMENT**

**To the Specification:**

[0004] As a result of the continuous reduction of the price per unit memory size, electrically erasable programmable read-only memory (EEPROM) devices are more often used as non-volatile storage devices. One essential part of an EEPROM cell is the tunnel oxide layer, which should be sufficiently thin so that carriers can tunnel through under a high electric field. The quality and stability of the tunnel oxide layer are also important issues, since the charge retention capability and other important characteristics of an EEPROM device is closely related to these properties.